

SARAH BERNHARDT'S CAT.

An Interview With the Actress in Which She Denies that Roast Feline Story.

The Famous French Woman Annoyed by the Published Tales of Her Cruelty.

She Never Abused a Pet in Her Life What Sarah's Hundred Cat Birds Think of the Story.

Some weeks ago the INDEPENDENT published a story, taken from a Chicago paper, that Sarah Bernhardt, the famous French actress, annoyed by a favorite cat which kept jumping in her lap and purring, picked the unfortunate animal by the loose skin at the back of the neck and raising the top of a stove, thrust the struggling animal in on the hot coals; then shutting the cover, she calmly resumed her work, as if utterly unconscious of the heartrending cries of her pet, which slowly roasted to death. A New York World correspondent recently called on the actress, and thus gives the result:

I called on Sarah Bernhardt this evening and found her in her dressing-room in the Porte St. Martin theater in company of the first premier of the Tuscany troupe, whose temples were still running with the perspiration of Scarpia's torments. Sarah, for a widow of so recent creation, was looking remarkably lively and younger than ever.

I said: "It's about this cat story."

She said: "It's the most ridiculous nonsense that was ever invented."

"Is there no truth in it whatever? Perhaps you singed a rug or something; a cat-skin, one of those things you use in France against rheumatism or something of the sort?"

"Fugh! Just think of the horrible smell that would have made. No, there is no truth in it at all. I can't imagine who gets up these stories against me. This is not the first time I have been accused of ill-treating animals. About four years there was put into circulation a story that I had baked a favorite spaniel of mine (the dearest little dog you ever saw) in the oven."

"Who are those ladies who accuse you?"

"Oh, I think they must be (what do you call them?) hallucinationesses, isn't it? people belonging to the Salvation Army."

"There is a story that you have instructed solicitors to prosecute the inventors of this accusation?"

"Oh, no. I hear the story has been withdrawn. All I have done was to write to London to give it my most emphatic denial."

"I suppose you look at it all as a very good joke?"

"Oh, not at all. I think it is a very serious matter and most upset about it. I know that for Mrs. Cook, the president of the Humane Society, to have taken it up there must have been a strong feeling on the subject. The resolution passed by the Missouri ladies, inviting the women of America to receive me with coldness on my next visit to the states, would be, if it were generally adopted, the most disastrous thing that could happen to me, both socially and as an artist."

"In America the women are the absolute mistresses of everything. (Les femmes en Amerique meient tout.) The man does not exist in matters of this sort. You have no idea," she continued, turning to a lady sitting in her dressing room, "of the importance of the role played in America by the women. It is as if the men, having no time to attend to matters of sentiment, relegate them into the hands of their wives and sisters. But I cannot think that this resolution will have any effect, because it is not only completely unjust, but is so obviously absurd. I can quite understand that if the Americans believe me to be guilty of this wickedness, they should be disgusted, because there is, perhaps, no country in the world where animals are better treated than in the states. You should see how fat the horses are out there. I have often thought as I have been traveling through America and have seen their splendid cattle, of the poor miserable horses in Paris; which you know the Parisians themselves call 'The Woman's Paradise, the Horse's Hell.' So I am most anxious to have that story denied. I assure you again and again that there is not a word of truth in it."

"You have the reputation of being very fond of animals?"

"Fond? But I adore them. Yes, that is not exaggeration. I adore them. I have loved them all my life. A pet animal is such a good friend to have. It is faithful; it is fond of you; it wants nothing from you but a little kindness, and it does not worry you as men do with interminable compliments and idiocies. Why, I look forward to the time when I shall be too old to play, and shall have ever so many animals about me. I think that will be the happiest time of my life. Did you never hear how angry I was with Pasteur and the quarrel we had? I called him an old barbarian. I never can be without animals. I don't think I could live without them. People thought that I kept those tigers to get myself talked about. At least that is what the papers said."

"It was nothing of the sort. It is because I have a real affection for them, and more than an affection—a most sincere admiration. The tiger-cat is the most graceful thing. We women who think ourselves the most graceful things on God's earth, we can't compare with it. Then there is my catbird, the dearest of friends. Do you know that I feel that they understand every word I say to them? I have thought this all my life, that animals understand all we say to them, but despise us and all our business, and too much to trouble to answer us; that is, to trouble to learn our language to answer us with."

"I dare say that is all nonsense, but it is my impression. I know that often when my nerves are unstrung and it would drive me mad to have to talk to Peter or Paul (you know you have seen me in that state) I have the greatest pleasure in going and talking for hours together to my cats or to my dogs or to my birds. I often tell them things that I would never tell to any human being, and I am sure they sympathize with me."

"Thus when I heard about this story of my ill-treating that cat, I had all my animals brought into my studio, where my big bird cage is, and I told them what was being said about me over there, and I am sure that they all merely died of laughing. The birds were all terribly noisy all that evening, doubtless passing counter resolutions. Ask Mme. Guerard, my house-keeper, if I am a woman who would torture an animal. She will tell you that before I met I see the pets have been cared for, that I often feed them myself when I am not tired out with work and worry, but that always they are my first care."

"You still have as many birds as you used to have?"

"More than ever. I have now 112 pet birds, and I know and love every one of them. Yes, 112 birds; and so if my reputation of being my pet in my eyes is true you need never be frightened of my dying of hunger. I have there the wherewithal to feed myself for a long time. One bird a day. Why, they would last me nearly half a year. And as they are of many different kinds, I could vary my menu pretty often. But, to be serious, please tell the women of America that a cruel injustice has been done me, and that it has pained me much."

I think I know them well enough to say that they will not let me suffer long."

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A gentleman who had suffered great annoyance and pain from barber's itch, and had been treated by the best physicians, without relief, says that two bottles of Dunder's Specific cured him and left his face perfectly smooth without a scar. It never fails in skin diseases. Sold by R. S. Hale & Co., wholesale and retail agents, Helena.

An immense line of dolls now to be seen at The Bee Hive.

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LEGAL NOTICES

LOCALIZATION OF CITY ASSESSMENT.—Notice is hereby given that the assessment of property for city taxes for the current year has been completed, and that all persons feeling themselves aggrieved thereby shall appear before the city council, sitting as a board of equalization, on Tuesday, Oct. 22, next, at 7:30 a. m. S. R. DOUGLAS, City Assessor, Helena, Mont., Oct. 16, 1889.

NOTICE OF STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING.—The annual meeting of the stockholders of the Home Building & Loan Association, of Helena, for the election of nine trustees, to serve for the ensuing year, and for the transaction of other business, will be held at the office of the association, room 2, Broadway block, at 9 p. m., Saturday, Oct. 20. A. J. STEELE, Secy.

NOTICE.—ALL TEACHERS HOLDING CERTIFICATES to teach in the county of Lewis and Clarke are required to attend the institute which will be held in the Helena central school building, Warren street, Nov. 11, 13 and 16. HELEN P. CLARKE, Co. Supt. Common Schools, Helena, Oct. 15, 1889.

STOCKHOLDERS MEETING.—THE ANNUAL meeting of the stockholders of the Paymaster Mining Company, will be held at the office of A. R. Barber in Helena, on Saturday, Oct. 20th, 1889. By order of W. H. Green, president. W. D. SMITH, Secy.

PUBLIC SALE.—NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that in pursuance of an order of the probate court, county of Lewis and Clarke territory of Montana, made on the 12th day of October, 1889, in the matter of the estate of James McAvoy, deceased, the undersigned, executor of the estate of said deceased, will sell at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, on Thursday, the 21st day of October, 1889, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the residence of said Felix Landry, on Ten Mile creek, in said Lewis and Clarke county, the following personal property, to-wit: One saddle horse, 6 years old; 1 light bay mare, 10 years old; one bay mare, 2 years old; 1 sorrel colt 3 years old; 1 bay filly 2 years old; 1 sorrel colt 1 year old; 1 brown colt 1 year old; 1 best horse; 1 set harness; 1 shaft wagon; 1 saddle bedding; 1 stove and fixtures; provisions and dishes; 1 cribbage; 2 saws; 1 box cooper's tools; 1 set wood-chop's tools; 1 gun &c, &c.

FELIX LANDRY, Executor of the Estate of James McAvoy, deceased. Dated Oct. 12, 1889.

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